

11 October 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

BRONZE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

I am writing to inform you about the fantastic opportunity for your son to sign up for the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) at RGS.

This letter covers the following points:

- 1) **What is The Duke of Edinburgh's Award?**
- 2) **Why should your son undertake the Award?**
- 3) **What are the sections or activities that he has to do?**
- 4) **How long does it take and how old does he need to be?**
- 5) **How many places are available and how are they allocated?**
- 6) **How much does it cost?**
- 7) **When do the training and the expeditions take place?**
- 8) **What kit does my son need?**
- 9) **How does my son apply?**
- 10) **Volunteering opportunity**

1. **What is The Duke of Edinburgh's Award?**

It is the world's leading achievement award for young people, and is highly regarded by universities, colleges and employers. It encourages young people to develop independence, commitment, leadership and teamwork through being involved in a personalised programme of activities.

There are three levels of programme you can do which, when successfully completed, lead to a **Bronze, Silver** or **Gold** Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The main differences between them are the minimum length of time it takes to complete the respective Award, how challenging it is and the minimum age you can start.

2. **Why should your son undertake the Award?**

It will inspire your son to make a difference to the local community, learn new skills, become fitter through sport and expeditions and increase his confidence. In this competitive world, it helps your son stand out from the crowd and shows that he is dedicated, organised, motivated and a team player, characteristics which universities and employers alike are looking for at their institutions.

The School fully supports the Award and recognises its unique value for developing skills and attributes in RGS pupils. It is a great way for RGS pupils to be recognised for their achievement in all the things they probably already do both in and out of school.

Incidentally, many of the things your son currently does will already count for the Award. Being in a sports team, learning a musical instrument or another language, the Queen's Hall Team, CCF, Stage Lighting and Sound Team, mentoring etc. are all relevant.

3. **What are the sections or activities that he has to do?**

He can achieve an Award by completing a personal programme of activities in four sections. These sections are:

Volunteering - helping someone, your community or the environment.

Physical - becoming fitter through sport, dance or fitness activities.

Skills - developing existing talents or trying something new.

Expedition – planning/training/completing an adventurous journey (this section is organised by the School).

4. How long does it take and how old does he need to be? ([DofE Timescales](#))

It takes a minimum of **6 months** to complete Bronze. Your son must be in Year 9 and do a minimum of 3 months activity for each of the Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections and plan and undertake two 2-day (1 night) Expeditions. He will also need to do an extra 3 months in one of the Volunteering, Physical or Skills sections. It's a good idea to decide all this at the beginning of the programme, so he can manage his time effectively.

NB. The length of time taken for all the Awards is stated in months, but please note he must show **regular** activity and commitment during this time of **at least an hour a week**. He can't achieve an Award in a short burst of enthusiasm over one weekend! Finally, all DofE activities **must** be completed by his 25th birthday.

5. How many places are available and how are they allocated?

There is no limit to the number of places available, but historically we usually have about 96 places.

6. How much does it cost?

The total cost will be £260 (paid in two instalments of £130 and £130) and includes the following:

- Cost of the staff running and administering the DofE award at RGS
- DofE Welcome Pack (£21)
- Licence fee to DofE South East Regional Office
- Training, Practice and Qualifying expeditions
- Maps and navigational equipment
- Access to trekking kit and camping equipment
- Updating and replacing of equipment
- Campsite, Instructor & Assessor fees
- Supervision on expeditions by a qualified Mountain Leader and other experienced instructors
- eDofE account
- School insurance
- Certificate and badge upon successful completion

The following are not included:

- Food during the expedition weekends (this will be discussed, agreed and sourced by teams in advance)
- Personal camping and trekking equipment (RGS has a small supply of this kit to assist those in financial difficulty)
- Additional costs relating to completion of other sections of the Award.

We will write to you next year to provide you with all the expedition information including dates, as well as asking for the second and final payment of £130.

As a form of comparison, last year a local boys' and girls' grammar school charged between £275 and £295 for Bronze. Both schools use external companies to provide the expedition and much of the training section, whilst at RGS we use the skills and experience of RGS staff and buy in DofE instructors to minimise the costs making it as accessible as possible. **NB: We would not want any RGS parent to not consider this opportunity due to cost. If you would find this financially difficult, please contact me in strictest confidence, as there may be funding available to assist you.**

7. When does the training and the expedition take place?

This is a provisional date but may be subject to change. However, it gives you a rough indication of when it might take place.

Please note, we have put the Bronze Expeditions in Year 10 for the following reasons:

1. The majority of Year 9 are not physically and/or mentally mature enough to cope with the challenges of unaccompanied Bronze Expeditions.
2. It enables your son to complete the Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections of the Bronze Award in Year 9 before starting the Expedition section and (if he so wishes) the Silver Award in Year 10.

NB: Boys **must** complete both the practice and qualifying expeditions; otherwise they will not complete the expedition section and therefore cannot obtain the Award at that level.

8. What kit does my son need?

Please see the [DofE Essential Kit List](#). A limited supply of this kit is available on loan for free from the DofE/CCF stores and it is marked with an *. If you need to purchase any kit, please make sure you ask if the store gives a discount to DofE participants as they generally do.

9. How does your son apply?

We believe that the Award can benefit your son in many ways, but there is also a level of commitment required. Places will only be allocated once the following have been complied with:

1. Log into Parent Pay **before Friday 30 November**, look up “**DofE Bronze 2018**” and pay the initial instalment of £130. Once you have paid this fee, your son will have a place on the Award. **NB: If you are unable to pay online, please contact the Finance Office to pay by an alternative method.**
2. Read the [DofE Parent and Pupil Annual Agreement](#) and complete the [Bronze DofE Consent Form](#).
3. Complete the [Combined Programme Planner](#) on this link and email it to sportsadmin@rgshw.com as a photo/scanned image or post/hand in a hard copy to the Resources Centre, marked for the attention of Mrs Henry **by Friday 30 November**.
4. Once the enrolment fee and both forms are received, we will process your son’s application and next term he will receive registration details and a login to record his progress and adventures electronically via eDofE.
5. Your son can start any of his activities immediately or retrospectively from 1 September 2018. It is essential that all activities are selected from the approved [DofE Programme Ideas List](#). If an activity is listed under Physical, it cannot be used for Skills and vice versa. If you or your son are unsure about an activity he has selected, he should contact Mrs Henry sportsadmin@rgshw.com as soon as possible for clarification.
6. We will be holding a DofE Parents & Pupils Information Evening on **Wednesday 21 November 2018 at 6.30pm in the Queen’s Hall** and you and your son’s attendance is highly recommended. There will be a short presentation followed by a Q&A session. Please click [here](#) and complete the online booking form to confirm your attendance.

I wish your son every success with the Award, but in the meantime if you or your son require any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me on crg@rgshw.com or Mrs Henry on sportsadmin@rgshw.com or both of us on **01494 551404**.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C R Greenhough', written in a cursive style.

C R Greenhough
Head of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award